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U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

D2

APR 26 2004

FILE: SRC 01 149 55256 Office: TEXAS SERVICE CENTER Date:

IN RE: Petitioner:
Beneficiary:

PETITION: Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker Pursuant to Section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the
Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All documents have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

Mar Johnson

for Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The service center director denied the nonimmigrant visa petition and the AAO dismissed the petitioner's appeal. The matter is now again before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on motion to reopen/reconsider. The motion will be granted. The previous decisions shall be affirmed. The petition will be denied.

The petitioner is a restoration and construction company that seeks to employ the beneficiary as a general manager. The petitioner endeavors to classify the beneficiary as a nonimmigrant worker in a specialty occupation pursuant to section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1101 (a)(15)(H)(i)(b).

The director denied the petition because the proffered position is not a specialty occupation and the beneficiary is not qualified to perform a specialty occupation. Counsel states that a timely appeal was filed; however, as the brief was not properly received at the AAO, the AAO dismissed the appeal. Counsel now resubmits the same brief on motion to reopen/reconsider.

The AAO will first address the director's conclusion that the position is not a specialty occupation.

Section 214(i)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1184 (i)(1), defines the term "specialty occupation" as an occupation that requires:

- (A) theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge, and
- (B) attainment of a bachelor's or higher degree in the specific specialty (or its equivalent) as a minimum for entry into the occupation in the United States.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A), to qualify as a specialty occupation, the position must meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) A baccalaureate or higher degree or its equivalent is normally the minimum requirement for entry into the particular position;
- (2) The degree requirement is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations or, in the alternative, an employer may show that its particular position is so complex or unique that it can be performed only by an individual with a degree;
- (3) The employer normally requires a degree or its equivalent for the position; or
- (4) The nature of the specific duties is so specialized and complex that knowledge required to perform the duties is usually associated with the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree.

Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) interprets the term "degree" in the criteria at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A) to mean not just any baccalaureate or higher degree, but one in a specific specialty that is directly related to the proffered position.

The record of proceeding before the AAO contains: (1) Form I-129 and supporting documentation; (2) the director's request for additional evidence; (3) the petitioner's response to the director's request; (4) the director's denial letter; (5) Form I-290B and supporting documentation; (6) the AAO's dismissal of the appeal, and (7) the motion to reopen/reconsider. The AAO reviewed the record in its entirety before issuing its decision.

The petitioner is seeking the beneficiary's services as a general manager. Evidence of the beneficiary's duties includes: the I-129 petition; the petitioner's letter in support of the petition; the petitioner's response to the director's request for evidence; and the motion to reopen/reconsider. According to this evidence, the beneficiary would perform duties that entail general management, including preparing sales reports, managing human resources and finances, and handling marketing. The petitioner indicated that a qualified candidate for the job would possess a bachelor's degree in business administration.

The director found that the proffered position was not a specialty occupation because the job is essentially that of a construction manager. Citing to the Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook (Handbook)*, the director noted that the minimum requirement for entry into the position was not a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent in a specific specialty. The director found further that the petitioner failed to establish any of the criteria found at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A).

On motion, counsel states that the proffered position goes beyond that of a construction manager and is more correctly titled top executive. Counsel indicates that the position is specialized and complex; thus, it requires the specialized knowledge associated with the attainment of a bachelor's degree in a specific specialty.

The AAO notes that business administration is not a specific specialty. A petitioner must demonstrate that the proffered position requires a precise and specific course of study that relates directly and closely to the position in question. Since there must be a close corollary between the required specialized studies and the position, the requirement of a degree with a generalized title, such as business administration or liberal arts, without further specification, does not establish the position as a specialty occupation. *Matter of Michael Hertz Associates*, 19 I&N Dec. 558 (Comm. 1988).

Moreover, the position of top executive is usually not considered to be a specialty occupation. The AAO routinely consults the Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook (Handbook)* for its information about the duties and educational requirements of particular occupations. A review of the *Handbook's* description of the education and training requirements for top executives indicates that there are many routes to entering into such a position, including obtaining a baccalaureate or higher degree in various fields and being promoted from within a company's ranks.

On motion, counsel indicates that the evidence meets the criterion at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(iii)(A)(4), that the nature of the specific duties is so specialized and complex that knowledge required to perform the duties is usually associated with the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree. To the extent that they are depicted in the record, the duties do not appear so specialized and complex as to require the highly specialized knowledge associated with a baccalaureate or higher degree, or its equivalent, in a specific specialty. Therefore, the evidence does not establish that the proffered position is a specialty occupation under 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(4).

The record contains no evidence to establish any of the four criteria outlined in 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A). Therefore, the proffered position is not a specialty occupation. In addition, it appears that there does not exist the requisite employer/employee relationship in the instant case, as the beneficiary is the company's sole U.S. worker, is the president of the petitioner's organization, and signed the Form I-129 himself. Accordingly, the AAO shall not disturb the director's denial of the petition.

The director also found that the beneficiary would not be qualified to perform the duties of the proffered position if the job had been determined to be a specialty occupation. However, as the AAO is dismissing the appeal because the job is not a specialty occupation, it will not discuss the beneficiary's qualifications.

The burden of proof in these proceedings rests solely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. The petitioner has not sustained that burden.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed. The petition is denied.